

# Working for OUR community

## Mary Ann Handley

### Aid for Towns in the 4<sup>th</sup> Senate District

The beginning of our state's economic recovery has already had a positive impact on our state budget. This year, we ended up with a small surplus and the General Assembly has decided to invest much of the additional money into aid to municipalities to help pay for local schools and to hold down property taxes.

Pequot & Mohegan Revenue Sharing	\$1,060,191
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$1,625,058
Town Aid Road Fund (TAR)	\$460,502
Total Education Grants	\$35,355,148
Local Capital Improvement Projects	\$713,379
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$39,214,278</b>

*The increase over  
last year in  
state aid to towns  
in the 4<sup>th</sup> District  
is \$1,013,240.*

### New Opportunities for Area Students

Great Path Academy, a magnet school operated on the campus of Manchester Community College, will receive approximately \$41.2 million to finance a permanent facility and expanded enrollment. The Great Path program targets so-called 'discouraged students,' and has had dramatic success. Eighty percent of the first class to graduate from the academy are planning to go to college. Glastonbury also benefits from legislation that extends by an additional year the state's commitment to help finance a new elementary school when locally approved.



### Glastonbury Ferry Returns With Lower Fares

Together with my colleague, Sen. Billy Ciotto, I successfully fought to restore service and reasonable fares to the Glastonbury/Rocky Hill ferry. Last year, state budget difficulties forced fares to increase by more than 100% and service to be reduced. The Connecticut River Ferry Preservation Association documented a 62 percent decline in vehicle and driver traffic and a 49 percent decline in passenger traffic when the new higher fares were in effect. Residents throughout the 4th district welcome the seasonal alternative provided by the ferry because the Hartford crossings can so often become congested, and they need quick access to I-91.

## SUMMER 2004

Dear Friend:

Yet another legislative session is behind us and despite the ever-present specter of the possible impeachment of the governor, we were able to pass important legislation to keep Connecticut a great place to live and work.

Through hard work and dedication, we restored our citizens' faith in government, a faith that was so badly damaged by scandals we hear about almost daily. We also brought property tax relief to our over-burdened taxpayers by increasing the property tax credit on your state income tax; started the crucial task of repairing the safety net for the state's poorest of the poor; and made major strides in protecting our air and water through important environmental legislation.

The legislature recently opened a Special Session, to be convened should the House Select Committee of Inquiry decide articles of impeachment against the governor are necessary. Should the House decide to impeach the governor, the Senate would return for a trial, which would give us the most serious responsibility of deciding whether the governor should be removed from office.

I hope you find this newsletter informative. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Handley  
State Senator, 4th District



From your State Senator

# Mary Ann HANDLEY

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I'm proud  
to represent the  
**4th Senatorial  
district** which  
includes the  
communities  
of Bolton,  
Glastonbury,  
Manchester, and  
Marlborough

For my latest news, visit  
[www.senatedems.state.ct.us/Handley.html](http://www.senatedems.state.ct.us/Handley.html)



**State Senator**  
**Mary Ann Handley**  
ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER  
CHAIRMAN: Human Services  
VICE CHAIRMAN: Environment  
RANKING MEMBER: Internship MEMBER: Appropriations

Representing Bolton, Glastonbury, Manchester & Marlborough

**The Press Room**  
Senator Handley's corner of our **Press Room** includes recent press releases and his Press Kit.  
**Legislation**  
A list of bills introduced by Senator Handley during the 2004 session can be found on the General Assembly Web site.

**Newsletter**  
Senator Handley's winter 2003 district-wide constituent newsletter (Adobe PDF format).  
Handley-DW03.pdf (463k)  
2004 Education Plan:  
Handley-0402-Ed.pdf (329k)

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**ABOUT SENATOR HANDLEY**  
State Senator Mary Ann Handley represents the Fourth

**Look & Listen**  
**VIDEO**  
An special

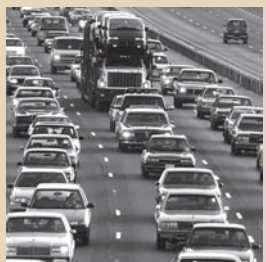
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STATE SENATOR  
**Mary Ann Handley**



*Continuing to Work  
for Connecticut's Future*



**EXPANDING THE SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM**

This year we expanded and enhanced the state’s premier school readiness program by increasing the number of spaces available in the state’s neediest 40 school districts, requiring more college-level training by credentialed staff, and making the hours required for student participation more flexible to better serve the needs of working families. By increasing funding to this important program, we make a wise investment in the future of our children and the future of our state.

**CHILDHOOD NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

In the last decade, obesity rates have doubled among American children. Childhood obesity, mainly caused by poor diet and inactivity, is associated with diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure and sleep apnea. This session, we took action to help curb the trend of obesity in our state, by putting an increased focus on nutrition and activity in our schools. Beginning this fall, schools will need to provide lunch periods of at least twenty minutes daily. They will also need to have low fat foods and drinks available for purchase. In addition, elementary schools must provide a period of physical exercise in every full school day. Schools are a great place to start reinforcing healthy diet and physical activity messages.

**ADVOCACY FOR MORE SENIORS**

Nursing home residents have rights, too, although this sometimes seems to be forgotten. Connecticut’s Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman currently helps residents in nursing homes with problems, complaints and advocacy issues. This valuable resource will now be extended, on a pilot program basis, to residents receiving assisted living services. As more seniors choose assisted living for their long-term care needs, they deserve access to the same quality services that nursing home residents also receive.

**CLEAN CARS**

As the air quality in Connecticut has grown increasingly worse, asthma rates have continued to rise and the well being of our environment has been threatened. Although we have worked hard to alleviate this problem by reducing emissions from our state’s power plants, there is more that can be done. That’s why this session we passed a bill that would require light duty vehicles to meet stricter emission standards, beginning with the 2008 model year. This legislation will help to reduce air pollution and allow Connecticut’s residents to breathe easier.

**LICENSE SUSPENSION OF DRUNKEN DRIVERS**

In an effort to protect Connecticut residents from drunk drivers, the legislature voted to establish a different driver’s license suspension procedure for certain drunk drivers. Those offenders who have been arrested for driving while under the influence (DUI) may have their license suspended by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) immediately if the offender was involved in an accident resulting in a fatality or if they have previously had their license suspended for a DUI offense during the preceding 10 years. In an effort to rehabilitate those with substance abuse addictions, the legislation also allows someone charged with DUI who has applied for the pretrial alcohol education program, to be ordered to complete either an alcohol intervention program or a substance abuse treatment program. Sober drivers mean safer roads in Connecticut.

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

The increased concentration of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, methane and nitrogen oxide in our atmosphere has the potential to affect our global climate substantially. This could also create major changes in our weather patterns and threaten the beauty of our coastlines, while further harming species and ecosystems. That’s why this session we passed a bill that would require Connecticut to establish regional greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and to develop a regional plan to achieve these goals. Beginning in 2005, it would also require the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection to annually report on the state’s progress towards reaching these goals. Although many of these goals are long-term, it is important that we think about protecting the future quality of our environment now.

**RESTORING TRUST IN GOVERNMENT  
AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

For well over a year, Connecticut residents have heard revelation after revelation about unethical activities in the executive branch. In response, the Senate Democrats have been working to restore the trust in government compromised by a select few who acted as if they were above the law.



*By making our  
already strong  
ethics laws even  
stronger, we  
send a message  
that Connecticut  
will not tolerate  
unethical behavior.*

As a result, this session we passed legislation that:

- Makes penalties for willful violation of our ethics code a felony punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine
- Extends the statute of limitations on ethics violations from 3 to 5 years and increases the maximum civil penalty from \$2,000 to \$10,000
- Strengthens the state’s ability to terminate contracts tainted by unethical behavior—helping the state recover the inflated costs of corruption
- Protects against conflicts of interest by requiring bidders on state contracts to disclose pertinent information about their financial interests and to sign affidavits noting any gifts they have given to agency officials and employees having a role in the contracting process
- Responds to the administration’s attempt to cut funding to the commissions that enforce ethics, elections, and freedom of information laws, by enacting legislation that would protect their budgets from such attacks year to year

By making our already strong ethics laws even stronger, we send a message that Connecticut will neither tolerate unethical behavior nor allow a few bad apples to spoil Connecticut’s long-standing reputation for good government.